

Working In Washington



DSHS
DIVISION OF
VOCATIONAL
REHABILITATION

2002-2003
Annual Report
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

The DVR Mission:

To empower individuals with disabilities to achieve a greater quality of life by obtaining and maintaining employment.



I am pleased to again participate in the presentation the Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) 2003 annual report. Throughout the pages of this report, you will see one consistent theme, partnering for people with disabilities. Here at DSHS, we are committed to promoting partnerships that go beyond state government directly to meet the needs of our customers across the state.

Throughout this report, you will see examples of the very partnerships that DVR employees have had the opportunity to cultivate through the work they accomplished in 2003. Within the stories you can see how it is these very partnerships that provide the avenue for people with disabilities to achieve economic self-sufficiency by assisting them to make meaningful choices about work and life.

DSHS and DVR are committed to improving services to our customers. The employees continue to step outside the box in providing quality services to our customers, our partnerships in the community and our families. DVR has a long and successful record of delivering quality services to their customers, and I am proud of all DVR staff for the positive influence they have in their communities and in the lives of all Washingtonians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dennis Braddock".

Dennis Braddock
Secretary



Dear Colleagues,

I am happy to share the Washington State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation 2003 Annual Report. When you read the customer success stories we have included, you will understand why we do the work we do. It makes a difference.

We are highlighting only a few of the cool jobs that DVR customers achieved this year. To tell the whole story, the report would include 2,405 stories, the number of people DVR helped achieve employment in 2003. I am proud of each one of these customers and all the DVR staff who made a difference in their lives.

This year, as with years past, our annual report reflects the increasing role that partnerships play in helping people with disabilities go to work. We have strengthened existing relationships and forged many new ones. DVR has created new relationships with our partner agencies in the Rehabilitation Act, the Department of Services for the Blind, Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, and Centers for Independent Living. By working together, we serve more people more effectively than we otherwise could.

DVR has also worked to build trust within the disability community, particularly with groups we have struggled to serve effectively. A deaf-blind task force and a Hispanic Task force were completed this year to identify specific actions DVR could take to improve services to each of those groups. We are already making progress. DVR is also contributing to local efforts in Seattle, Spokane, and Tacoma to create community-based employment programs for individuals with mental health illness. You will read more about these efforts, and others, in this report.

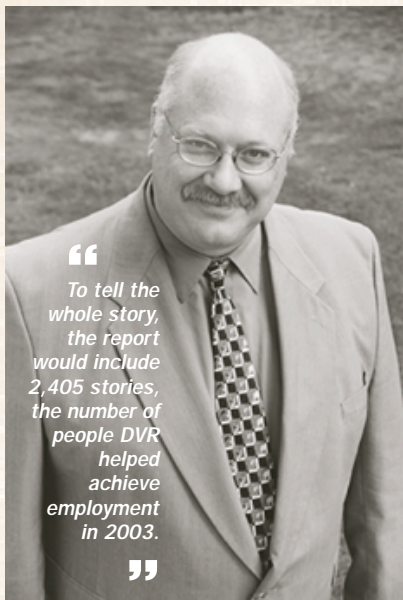
DVR has also served as a statewide leader in preparation for the statewide rollout of Ticket to Work. More than 20 partners have been brought together to lead the state in helping Ticket to Work succeed in Washington.

It brings me great pleasure to share the work we do to create opportunities for people with disabilities, one job at a time. Within the pages you will read stories about how individuals with disabilities, DVR staff and community partners are creating a better world for all of us.

Thank you for your interest and your contribution in achieving integration, inclusion and full participation in work and life for all people.

Warm Regards,

Mike O'Brien, Ed.D.
Director



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Creating Partnerships

In Washington State, DVR employees are continually encouraged to participate in their communities, discovering opportunities to promote the success of every individual with or without disability. In fact, it is some of these very partnerships that VR staff has created, that are perhaps some of the most impactful. Whether within the Asian American community in Tacoma, where one VRC is active in promoting the safety of her community or within the Art community in the Puget Sound, where one staffer promotes education and integration for people with disabilities in Glass Making, it is the opportunity of creating partnerships in uncommon places that bring us all together to promote each other, one relationship at a time.

This past year the division hired two corporate consultants, employment specialists that work directly with the business community for the education of employing people with disabilities in jobs at all levels and classifications. The division’s corporate consultants, who themselves are individuals with disabilities; work aggressively at promoting the employment of our customers at the top CEO level of corporations across the state.

The division has also actively engaged in community outreach for the employment and hiring of persons with disabilities this past year. Throughout this outreach effort, it became clear to DVR leadership that one community in our state was seriously underserved and there was a call to action from the director for change. A deaf blind taskforce was established in an effort to communicate with this community on issues that face this traditionally employment challenged population.



The first of its kind, a Hispanic Taskforce was developed to begin the process of removing cultural barriers for Hispanics with disabilities and has begun to build a great partnership with Latino leaders and DVR. “The Hispanic Taskforce was a great success for Latino communities across Washington,” says Esther Bennett, DVR Supervisor and Task Force Co-Chair. “We have already received great feedback and even had the taskforce highlights broadcast across the state on Latino radio stations,” says Bennett.

Throughout this past year, DVR Director Dr. Mike O’Brien held town hall meetings to allow for the disability community to be heard and to express the issues that face them each day. As a result of the community town hall meetings, and an agreement between Helen Keller New York, the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) and DVR, a Deaf Blind Specialist, who is herself, deaf and blind, was hired to work with what has traditionally been an underserved population within our state.

Although these are a few small but significant steps towards the employment and integration of people with disabilities in their communities, it perhaps is the activism itself in promoting those very people that is the key to our success.



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Coree Black

Coree never seems to slow down. She describes her high school years as going “by so fast I can hardly remember them.” This is not surprising since she obtained her high school diploma and AA degree (through Running Start) in June 2003. She keeps her career goal – working as a computer security specialist for the FBI – clearly in sight.

Coree also has several other notable accomplishments to her credit. She started her own business in 2000 which is still going strong. During her senior year she helped organize the creation of a scholarship for disabled students who needed money for technical devices such as computers.

Last fall DVR was called in to assist Coree with transition planning. She had been accepted at Washington State University for the 2003-2004 school year, but other barriers existed. DVR staff, Coree’s occupational therapist, school psychologist, Coree and her family met to address needs for assistive technology, personal care and classroom attendant. Home and Community Services supplied useful information and application forms.

Coree utilized a computer provided by Ephrata High School but now needed a system she could take to college. She also planned to continue her business of building multimedia presentations for newlyweds. Coree agreed to complete an evaluation at Easter Seals to help determine most suitable accommodations.

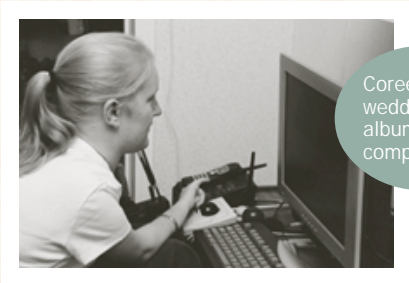
After Coree visited the Easter Seals office in Spokane, she reviewed their recommendations with her DVR counselor, Kathie Grignon, and her physical therapist. Coree utilized money she raised to purchase some of her equipment. DVR

provided the computer, workstation, and voice-activated programs. Personal assistance services were put in place by Home and Community Services, DVR funded the classroom attendant, and Coree set off for Pullman.

Now, halfway through her first quarter at WSU, Coree views this experience as “way more exciting than high school.” She states, “I love being out on my own. People are shocked that I even thought about moving out of my parent’s house. It doesn’t bother me ...because I’m so focused on the big picture...my career. Moving out and going to college is just all part of the plan. After I graduate I will be 20 years old...(with) my bachelor’s degree! I will then move to wherever there is a FBI headquarters that is willing to give me a job.”

Coree doesn’t see that she faces many challenges except “trying to get people to talk to me instead of people I’m with. One time a teacher asked my friend right next to me if I was comfortable reading aloud in class. I hurried and answered so he would know I could speak for myself. It makes me feel stupid, but mostly I just laugh about it afterwards.”

Coree’s biggest inspiration occurs “when people just come up to me and tell me I have inspired them by just being so happy and successful in life.” Kathie Grignon, Coree’s DVR counselor, is one of the many individuals whom Coree has inspired.



Coree creates wedding albums at her computer.

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Matt Neely

When one walks into the Indochinese Culture and Service Center (ICSC) in Tacoma, Washington, they will notice the thriving culture of the organization that is built of people who are overcomers. For one DVR Customer, Matt Neely who is living with Friedreich’s Ataxia (a progressive neurological disorder), the environment was a familiar, warm embrace.

The ICSC is filled daily with people who have had their lives toppled with challenges. “When people come in our doors, we help them move along to the place where they can move forward,” said Marcia Golubic, ICSC Executive Director. “Matt was a natural and welcomed addition to our team.”

Diagnosed with Friedreich’s Ataxia (FA) at 10 years old, Matt has lived a life full of challenges. At nearly 14 years old, Matt began needing to periodically use a wheelchair, and by the following year, he was using a wheelchair more regularly. When asked about living with FA Matt states, “It is very physically hard to deal with. It just irritates the heck out of me.” However, he smiles and adds, “I am emotionally and mentally well adjusted. I do not blame or resent anyone or anything for my disease.”

“Matt’s family is so supportive; they continually give him the freedom to make his own choices. His parents are keys to his success everyday,” said DVR Counselor Tuyet Nguyen.

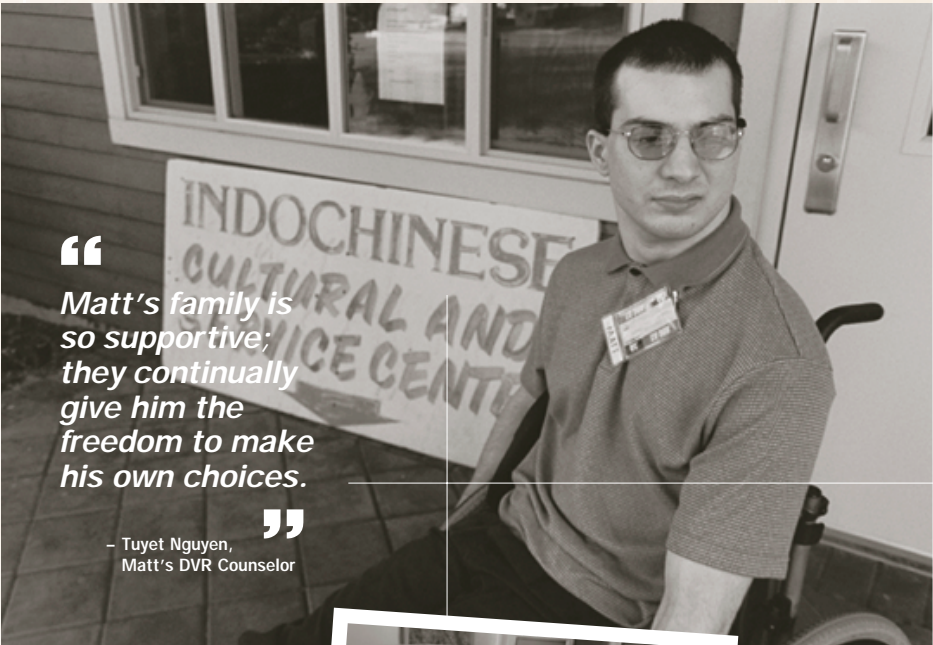
Like many of his peers, Matt is seeking to define his identity, and searching for his individuality. Although FA has taken his physical abilities, it has not taken away his dreams and his passion for life.

Matt attended Bates Technical College with an aspiration to be a computer game designer, where he completed his two year degree in computer programming. His determination for a career of his own, Matt sought out a job where he could use his computer skills and make an impact on the lives of people. “Matt came in the door knowing he could be of benefit, he just had to sell it,” said Golubic. “However, we are the ones who have most benefited.”

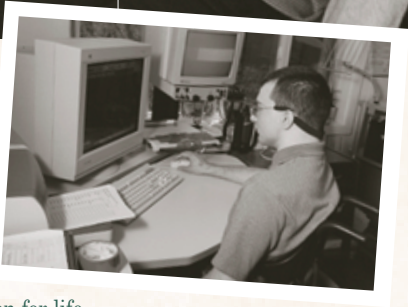
Besides the support from Matt’s family, he enjoys the support from the entire ICSC community and his DVR Counselor Tuyet Nguyen. Even though Matt is “technically” out of the DVR system, Nguyen still continues to support both he and his employer on an ongoing basis. With the partnership between DVR, Matt and his Family, ICSC and thanks to the Gates Foundation for the grant that makes his employment possible, Matt is realizing his goals and dreams every day.

During the rehabilitation process, DVR has provided Matt with all the support needed especially the technology necessary for Matt’s success on the job while Matt supplied the determination to make it all work.

Since beginning employment with ICSC two years ago, Matt’s health has greatly improved. “Matt is happy to come home from work, he is happier because he loves his job,” says Matt’s mom, Carmen.



“
Matt’s family is so supportive; they continually give him the freedom to make his own choices.
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– Tuyet Nguyen, Matt’s DVR Counselor



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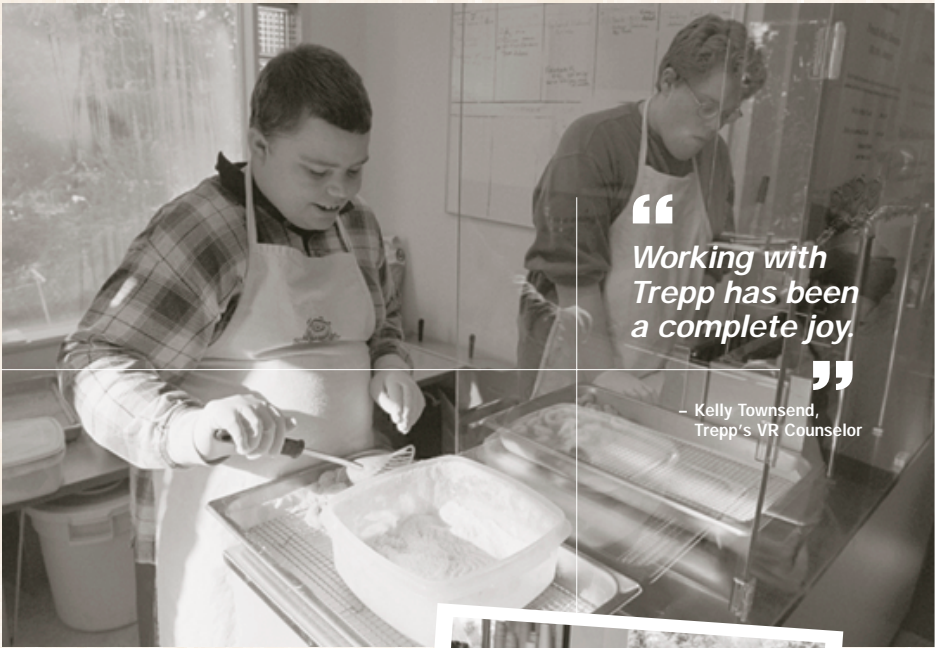
Trepp Hanseth

If you are ever in the mood for the best donut in the greater Seattle area, hop on the ferry from downtown Seattle and head to Bainbridge Island for a decadent and sweet experience. There you will find a successful partnership for one DVR Client, Jennings Hanseth III or more commonly known on Bainbridge Island as Trepp.

Trepp, who has a developmental disability, has found success with his popular Fresh Mini Donuts business. Trepp's Fresh Mini Donuts are made daily for several local businesses on Bainbridge Island. He also has an established retail presence in downtown Bainbridge Island.

The mini donuts business is part of a unique self-employment co-op through the Bainbridge Island Special Needs Foundation (BISNF), founded in part by Paul Deits, Chris Powers and Jay Hanseth as a way for disabled children to have meaningful work. Trepp is a successful business owner in his community with the support of Trepp's father, DVR, BISNF, a representative from the state Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Kitsap County Developmental Disabilities services and Kathy Reichgerdt, business consultant for Venture Advisory Services.

"Working with Trepp has been a complete joy," says DVR counselor Kelly Townsend. "Trepp's business is an excellent match for his unique support needs. Due to the rural nature of Bainbridge Island, there are no group supported employment opportunities within 40 miles of Trepp's home. Commuting to Bremerton to work in group supported employment would require a two-hour bus ride each way, taxing Trepp's stamina."



“Working with Trepp has been a complete joy.”

– Kelly Townsend, Trepp's VR Counselor



Trepp's Fresh Mini Donuts is located in downtown Bainbridge Island at Stephens House on Winslow Way. Stephens House is part of the BISNF a non-profit foundation, where a core group of volunteers and advocates meet bi-monthly to explore other small business ventures for young people with disabilities. It took a lot of different partners to get the concept of Stephens House off the ground, I am happy it is giving kids meaningful opportunities today and for their tomorrow," says Trepp's dad, Jay Hanseth.



Trepp heading out on a delivery.

Having success in this business provides Trepp the opportunity for future self-sufficiency. In the near future, options will be explored to allow Trepp to contribute to the costs of his project specialist by sharing support costs with disabled employees in his business, or with employees of other businesses located at Stephens House. Trepp's father, DVR and DDD are developing a plan to allow Trepp to pay all of his support costs through the profits from his business and his long term funding through the Division of Developmental Disabilities.

Success is just around the corner for so many people with disabilities when they have a great team and partnership. DVR can be the foundation of a great team.

To purchase donuts or make a contribution to Stephens House, call the center at (206) 780-1211.

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Jose Guadalupe Alonso Diaz

Farm workers are vital contributors to Washington State economy. Even growing up in Mexico, Jose was made very aware of this fact at an early age. Each year his father traveled to the United States to work in California, Washington and other states along the migrant stream. Jose waited eagerly for his father's return to show him his progress in school. His desire to excel in his school work made his family proud.

Jose carried his drive to excel on to college in Mexico where he graduated with honors and a technological bachelor degree in biological chemical sciences. That same summer Jose left Mexico and made the trip with his father to California to work the lettuce, hoping to one day use his education in the United States.

In December 2000 tragedy struck. Jose was electrocuted. He experienced a skull fracture and later required bilateral amputations. After many months of hospitalization in Mexico City he returned to Washington State. At this time he was referred to Fred Trujillo VRC by his DSHS social worker Chevy Zarrate and Home and Community Services social worker Norma Guel-McGrew.

Just seven months post injury, Jose required additional medical treatment and prosthetics. DVR called upon all of the partnership resources, Columbia Basin Health Clinic, Aging and Adult Care of Central Washington and Pat Martin, DVR Assistive Technology and Assessment Practitioner. That cooperation enabled VRC Fred Trujillo and Counselor Aide, Tami Alling, to complete a direct referral to the neurosurgery department at Harborview Hospital. Another community agency, People for People, transported Jose and his

mother to surgeries and follow-up appointments. Despite the 400-mile round trip journey, Jose never missed an appointment. He states he is thankful to all the medical staff for their excellent post-injury care.

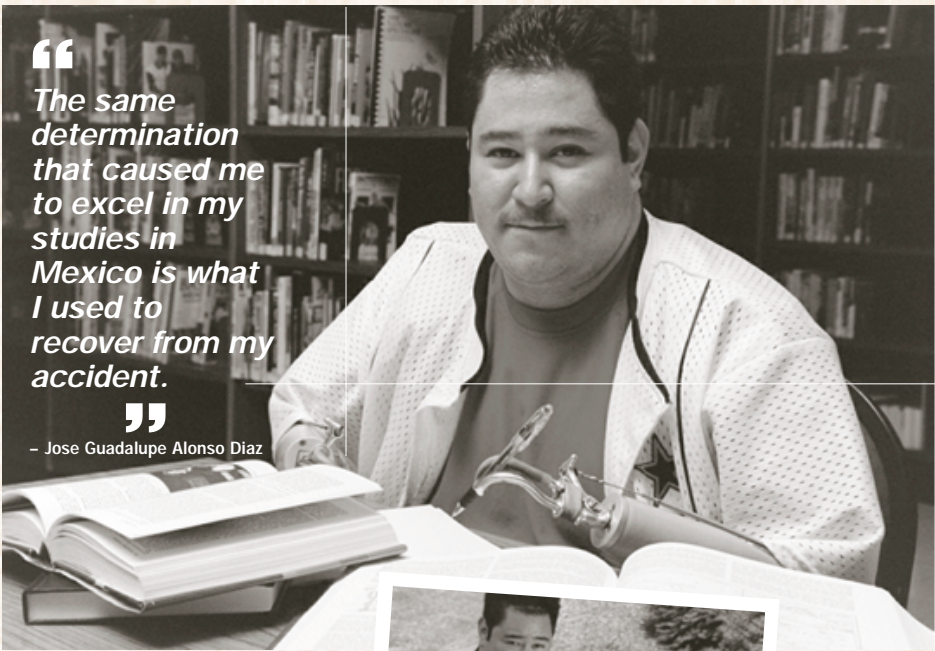
The building of relationships and the acquiring of new partners was not over for Jose and his team. DVR referred Jose to yet another partner who provided outstanding services for his future. His goal of obtaining a GED was reached in June of this year through DVR supports and the High School Equivalency Program at Columbia Basin College. Jose is hopeful that although his degree from Mexico is not recognized he will be able to utilize his GED to find employment in Washington. "The same determination that caused me to excel in my studies in Mexico is what I used to recover

from my accident. I will use the same to get me to a career in America." Jose said.

At this time Jose is on the road to achieving his career dreams. His family now lives with Jose and continues to support him. He keeps his faith strong and is learning to use his prosthetics more efficiently day by day. Jose's DVR counselor Fred Trujillo feels "Success is defined in many ways and this is truly the beginning of more successes to come for the whole of us, to partner together for the future of such a bright young man has changed us all."

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”

– Jose Guadalupe Alonso Diaz



Jose takes time to relax between classes.

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Kaki Reeves

On December 10, 2001 Kaki Reeves' friend noticed something different about Kaki Reeves. Kaki's speech was "funny" and her words were not making sense. The friend wasn't just imagining things, Kaki would soon learn that she had suffered a massive stroke. She was only 52 years of age.

The stroke affected her entire right side and she could not move, walk or talk. Kaki needed to relearn how to do even the basic functions of daily life. After a year of occupational therapy Kaki relearned how to walk, speak and ultimately, use her exercise bike. Through her therapy, Kaki was challenged with trying to regain her self image and esteem.

"Kaki was a very highly regarded professional in downtown Seattle until her stroke two years ago. She is now progressing with her rehab at a remarkable rate with the help of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and others," said Art Hayward, her vocational rehabilitation counselor (VRC).

Kaki is a passionate artist. She taught herself to paint with her left hand instead of her right hand after her stroke. She is currently taking speech therapy and also learning to express her feelings through her paintings. She has learned, despite the frustration at times, to point and gesture when words that are on the tip of her tongue will just not come out, due to aphasia.

The therapeutic deign of her art expression came out during speech therapy. Learning how to speak again as an adult who had seen many triumphs in



“
Kaki learned to express her self through her new found passion, her art.
”

– Art Hayward,
Kaki's VR Counselor

life was very emotional. "Kaki learned to express her self through her new found passion, her art," Hayward said.

Kaki still uses the assistance of caregivers about four hours a day to help with meals, run errands and do housekeeping. "I walk with a cane because I do not have any feeling on my right side, and I don't want to get knocked over. I am venturing out more and more on my own and am learning the public transit system for the physically impaired," she said.

With her VRC, and her supportive family, Kaki has had great success with preparing for art shows and exhibits around the Puget Sound this past spring and summer. Kaki and her VRC are convinced that she can make a living with the sale of her art, and DVR is making every effort to support this career goal.



Kaki at an art show in Spring 2003.



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Streamlining the Process

As part of their rehabilitation program, for entrance into the world of employment, many DVR customers frequently require the use of a personal computer. Provision of personal computers to DVR customers supports such activities as their educational program, job development, self-employment, and training.

For many years, making computers available for DVR customer use was a cumbersome process. DVR staff consulted with the customer to evaluate his or her individual computer needs then contacted a number of consultants and vendors to support the purchase of the product. DVR didn't have an efficient means to get the computers into the customer's homes and there was no sustainable plan to set up the equipment, or to service and eventually remove the product from customer's homes.

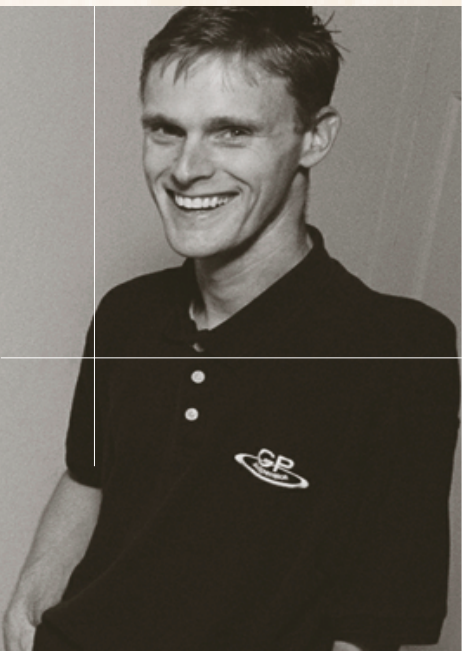
"We were looking for a vendor who could do more than just provide a computer for a customer," states Vianna Moody, DVR Information Services Manager. "We solicited bids from several companies; only one vendor was found to be able to work with us to do more than provide hardware."

Working with a Gateway representative, DVR management explained their requirements and frustrations and together, the team came up with a broad-range, end-to-end solution to meet the division's many needs. "DVR needed a standard platform and product solution which was reliable and flexible to meet the IT needs of a diverse environment," says Moody.

29 U.S.C. § 102 (d) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, requires state rehabilitation agencies that receive funding through the Rehabilitation Act to do the following:

(3) to develop and implement flexible procurement policies and methods that facilitate the provision of services, and that afford eligible individuals meaningful choices among the methods used to procure services, under this title;

Following this federal mandate, Washington State DVR entered into an agreement with a vendor who could meet the specific and unique needs of each individual with a disability requiring a computer as part of a plan to achieve employment.



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– Dan'l Knowles,
DVR Customer

”

With the solution now in place, the DVR team needed to implement an ordering system that would further streamline the computer procurement for staff and customers. DVR counselors can order the pre-purchased computer systems via the Intranet, removing endless phone calls, meetings and hours researching equipment. "The customer computer purchasing at DVR has been streamlined with the outcome of a very successful partnership," Moody said.

In coordination with a certified service provider, Ategan Technologies, arrangements to deliver and set up the specified equipment in the customer's home were made. Beyond supply and setup, DVR is provided with a comprehensive service agreement that assures all customers receive quick and easy repairs or upgrades to their machines whenever needed.

"When my counselor and I talked about the need for a computer for my schooling, I never dreamed I would have one so quickly, not long after that conversation I received a call to schedule delivery," DVR Customer, Dan'l Knowles.

DVR staff also no longer is involved in retrieving computer systems when a customer's case is closed. The vendor steps in to retrieve computers from customers, then refurbishes the computers and readies them for use by another DVR customer.

"Three very different entities came together to provide a service to people with disabilities, the end users are enjoying a very successful project with quantifiable deliverables. The success of this project has been based upon communication between all parties involved, primarily the counseling staff," Armga said.



Dan'l assists during the computer installation.

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Working Together

The WorkSource Disability Network (WDN) is a steering committee established to improve services and outcomes for people with disabilities by consolidating various efforts under a single planning and implementation framework. The WDN partners are using the Washington State Disability Plan as a guide for making the State's workforce development services as accessible and effective for people who have disabilities as they are for those who do not.

DVR is an integral partner in the WDN and member of the Joint Steering Committee to help model the way in creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities. "We can no longer be a silo in the WorkSource system," says Patti Stoneman Lowe, DVR Program Administrator. "It is important that we show that we are sharing our expertise and assisting our partners to ensure the centers are accessible for people with disabilities at the program level. From the financial level, we need to maximize our partnerships by empowering our partners to serve people with disabilities who may also be on our waiting lists. Because our staff has the expertise, we need to consult and educate our partners on how to work with people with disabilities." Stoneman Lowe said.

The Renton One-Stop Center is a model of accessibility in the state. The facility is physically accessible, including a reception area with a lowered counter to accommodate wheelchair users and a reader board to let visitors know that help in communication is available if they need spoken language interpreters or American Sign Language (ASL.)

At the Renton WorkSource Center, Choices Classes are offered to job seekers. DVR staff share responsibility for teaching these classes along with other WDN partners. Classes

include identifying career goals, resume writing and interviewing skills. The classes are available to everyone, and DVR's role is to support equal access and effectiveness for people with disabilities. DVR Counselor and Choices Trainer, Rene Karikoff says "The classes have been very successful for not just the individual but for the partnership within the WorkSource."

To further educate and discuss the role of DVR Counselors in the one-stop centers, DVR leaders met with WorkSource representatives in King and Snohomish Counties. As a result, a guide was developed that details the duties and responsibilities of the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor in the WorkSource Center. "These meetings were an effort to talk about what we can do in the centers, focusing on the positive, to help not just our customers with disabilities but to

strengthen the partnerships in the WorkSource Centers," says Don Kay, DVR Field Chief.

The benefits of the WDN partnership reflect positively on VR services and are providing access to employment services for people with disabilities who would otherwise be unserved.

"The WDN and Joint Steering Committee is a comprehensive coordinated approach that is sustained with the potential of permanently changing the WorkSource Delivery System in this state," Toby Olson, Executive Secretary to the Governor's Committee on Disability.



“The classes have been very successful for not just the individual but for the partnership within the WorkSource.”

- Rene Karikoff
DVR Counselor and Choices Trainer



Jan Peters of WDN facilitating a discussion.

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How do we measure the results that we achieve for our Customers?

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, as the designated state unit, provides quality vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals with disabilities. The public vocational rehabilitation program is one of the few federal programs that are reviewed annually on performance-based measures. These measures are known as the Federal Standards and Indicators for the Vocational Rehabilitation process.

Currently, there are two Federal Standards for which public VR programs are held accountable:

Standard I, Employment Outcomes:

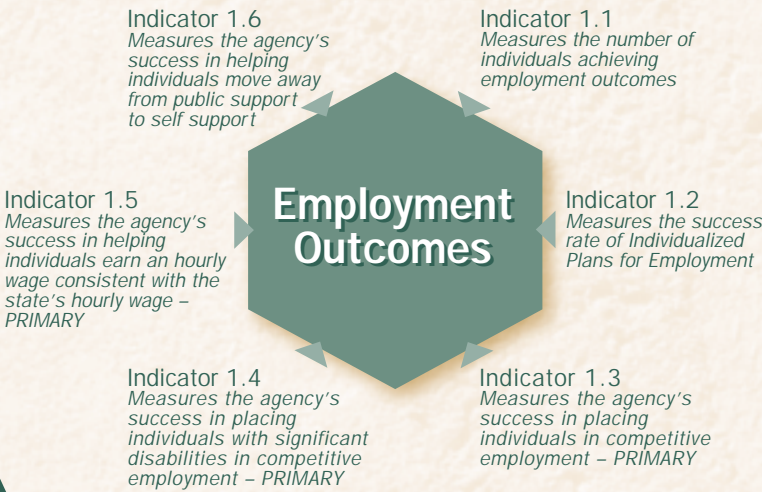
“A Designated State Unit (DVR) must assist any eligible individual, including an individual with a significant disability to obtain, maintain, or regain high-quality employment.”

Standard II, Equal Access to Services:

“A Designated State Unit (DVR) must ensure that individuals from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services.”

What are the performance indicators?

Employment Outcomes are measured by six performance indicators, three of which are considered PRIMARY INDICATORS, and focus on the quality of the employment outcomes.



Indicator II.1
Measures service provision to ethnic minority customers as compared to non-minority customers



Equal Access to Services is measured by one performance indicator.

To successfully pass the Federal Standards and Indicators, DVR must meet the minimum performance level for two of the primary indicators and four indicators over-all on Standard I, and the indicator on Standard II. During FFY 2003, DVR successfully passed the Federal Standards and Indicators.

What this means to our customers

This past year:

2,405 individuals with disabilities were successfully employed.

97.5% of those successfully employed were placed in competitive employment.

99.2% of those successfully employed in competitive employment were Individuals with Significant and Most Significant disabilities.

The average hourly wages for those successfully employed was more than \$10 per hour.

How we use the federal standards and Indicators

Some of the ways the division uses the standards and indicators are to:

- assess the effectiveness of the services we provide,
- help guide our strategic planning activities,
- identify areas for improvement,
- support our requests for funding, and
- compare our performance to other public vocational rehabilitation programs nationwide.

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Making a Difference Through Mentoring

Powerful things can happen when knowledgeable, caring people reach out to help others excel through mentoring. In recent years, mentoring has become a strong and valued component of DVR's Human Resource Development program. Employees are going above and beyond their job duties to help their colleagues learn new skills that have impacted their own personal and professional lives.

Mentoring is defined as a professional relationship between two people - one who is seeking advice or guidance in professional development (protégé); and the other is giving advice or guidance in professional development (mentor.) Having the wise counsel and advice of an experienced colleague helps protégés learn new skills, handle difficult situations, and accelerates their professional development. Serving as a mentor is very rewarding leaving the person with a sense of satisfaction and pride. Mentors often share that the partnership with their protégés often gives them valuable learning opportunities.



“
I am especially honored to be one of the first Deaf-Blind protégés in the program.
”
– Bruce Visser, mentoring with DVR Director Mike O'Brien

Participants in the mentoring program are free to seek mentoring partners within or outside of the DVR family. They may also choose to have more than one mentor/protégé, spending up to four hours a month of work time participating in mentoring activities. “Taking part in the mentoring program has been very rewarding for me, through the discovery of new interests, greater initiative in managing my career, and opportunities for networking,” Says John Priddy, two time mentoring program participant.

Perpetual learning is at an all time high in DVR. As a result, the program has significantly expanded with over 40 pairs currently participating in this year's program, up from eleven pairs participating in the Division's mentoring program last year. With the increase of mentoring partnerships, there are some very creative pairings both inside and outside of the division. Some mentors may be younger than their protégé or in a lower job classification but offer skills or knowledge that are highly sought by their protégé; some peers are mentoring each other and some serve a dual role of mentor and protégé. “There are no limits to learning in DVR,” Tonia Sugarman, Mentoring Program Coordinator, states “It's been

said that taking the time to reach out to others, sharing life's wisdom, and conveying respect for others is probably the least expensive and most powerful way to change the world, one life at a time.”

This year, DVR Director Dr. Mike O'Brien expressed a need to involve our community partners in the mentoring program. As a result he has offered two mentoring partnerships between the Deaf-Blind community and leadership in DVR. “I applied for the DVR mentoring program because it looked like a unique opportunity to work, learn, and network with current leaders and community partners. I am especially honored to be one of the first Deaf-Blind protégés in the program,” states Bruce Visser. Bruce will mentor with DVR Director, Mike O'Brien for one year.



Pictured Left to Right: Bill Youngman (protégé), Jennifer Marsh (protégé), and Jack Phipps (mentor).

Mentoring is a great way to pass down knowledge from one employee to another. One example of this knowledge hand-off is the mentoring-protégé partnerships between the seven DVR Assistive Technology and Assessment Practitioner (ATAP) and seven Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.

Over the next few years, five out of the seven ATAP's will be eligible to retire. This will create a significant loss in program knowledge and expertise that is being minimized through the mentoring relationships of these fourteen staff. Mentor Jack Phipps feels that “the mentoring program has been an excellent vessel to share the years of experience I have and will continue to impact the services to our customers long after my retirement.”

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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31						

David Wagner

You may not have heard of Washingtonian David Wagner, but if you keep your eye set on the 2004 Gold, as he does, you will soon.

David was injured while on a senior trip after high school graduation. He was playing in the ocean when a wave flipped him over causing him to land on his head. As a result of the accident, David sustained a broken neck, resulting in a spinal cord injury and quadriplegia. He has some limited use of his upper extremities, which this young man has used for maximum potential.

When David came to the Walla Walla Division of Vocational Rehabilitation office, he did not know exactly what he wanted to do with the rest of his life. However, the one thing he knew for certain, was that he wanted to work with children. After some extensive research, David and his Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) Andres Aguirre mutually agreed upon a goal of an Elementary School Teacher. “We researched training options and agreed upon Walla Walla Community College (WWC) as the best option for David to pursue his education,” says Aguirre. He was very determined to move as rapidly as possible towards his degree, which wasn’t surprising to his counselor.

After a few quarters of initial training at Walla Walla Community College, DVR assisted with two years of training at WWC. Upon completion of training, David was able to secure substitute positions at various schools in Walla Walla and College Place until suitable transportation was made available. With the use of a modified van David could pursue other positions.

Many of us look for contentedness in one job or career. Well, not David Wagner. This young man never settled with just a career as a teacher, he pushed to pursue a career as an Olympic athlete. “I am thankful to DVR for their support of my first love, teaching and appreciative because of their support I am able to pursue my passion for tennis because I have the flexibility to be a substitute teacher to fit my training schedule,” Wagner said.

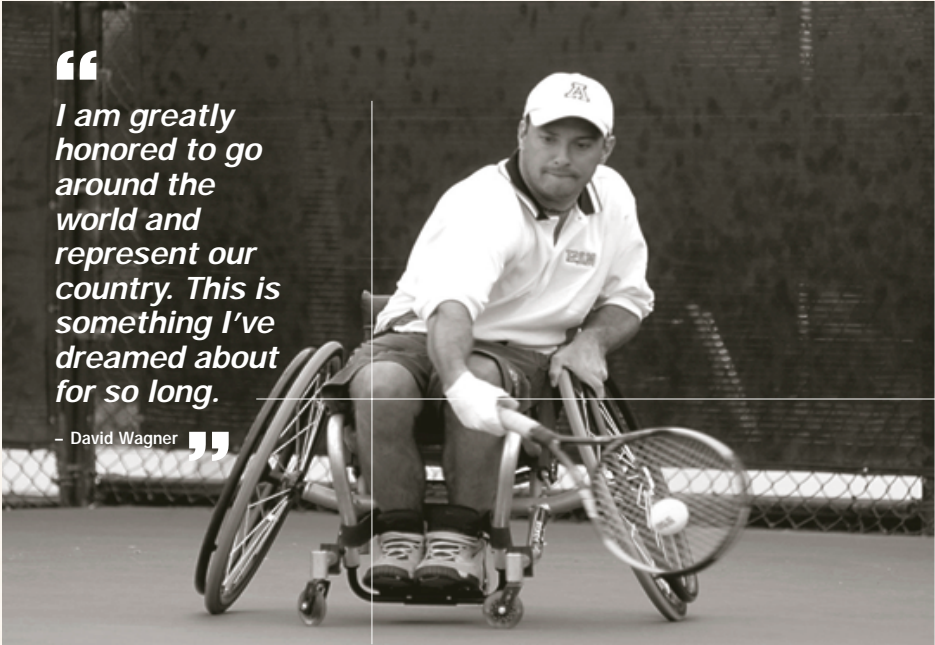
As the No. 1 ranked quadriplegic wheelchair tennis player in the world, Wagner enjoys traveling abroad in pursuit of Olympic Gold. He worked hard to become a world-class athlete. David trains at a very intense level and has maintained his passion for the game he loves, even after losing the use of his legs. “I may not be able to stand or walk but there is no reason for me to mope around just because I use a chair. I have gotten stronger physically and emotionally training as a top athlete,” Wagner says. He hopes to take home plenty of gold in both singles and doubles tennis at the 2004 Paralympic Summer Games in Athens, Greece.

“I am greatly honored to go around the world and represent our country. This is something I have dreamed about for so long,” Wagner said.

Wagner is now living in Tuscon, Arizona with his grandparents, where he has increased his training for the 2004 Games and is a substitute teacher. David credits his family for a great part of his success on the court and off.

“
I am greatly honored to go around the world and represent our country. This is something I’ve dreamed about for so long.

– David Wagner ”



David at a tennis tournament this summer.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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Mr. Nghia Le

Many people cannot comprehend the life that Mr. Nghia Le has lived. It is an inspiring life of pain, tragedy, determination and triumph. Prior to his 1993 arrival in the United States, Mr. Le had already realized great success in his life with a family of 5 children, and a career as an officer in the Republic South Vietnamese Army/Medical Corp. It was several years before he brought his family to America that his life in his home land changed dramatically.

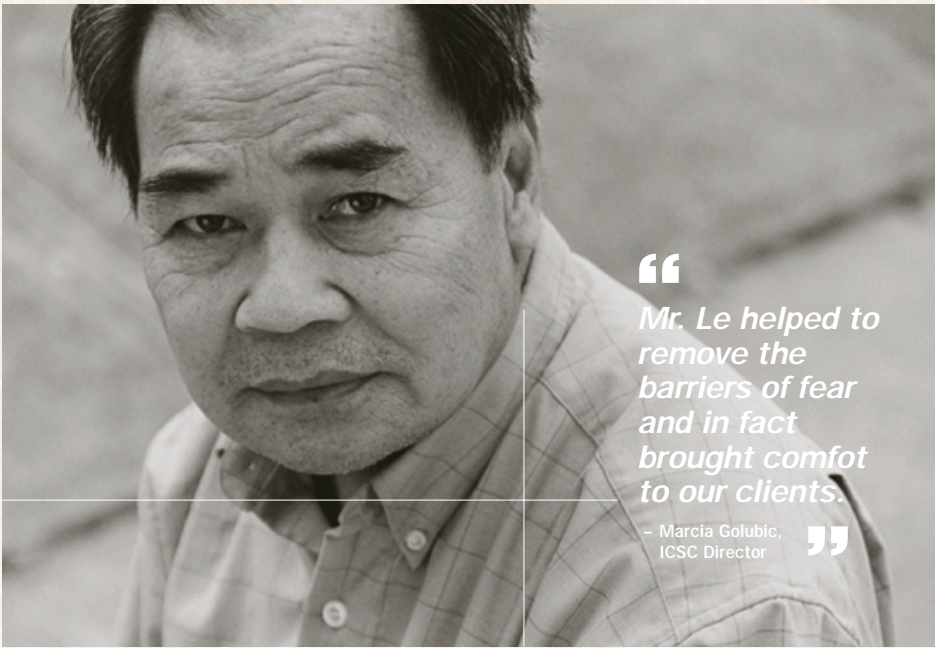
For over 6 years, Mr. Le was held captive in a North Vietnamese Prison Camp and treated as a hostile political prisoner. No words can explain the brutality he experienced.

However, when you look into his eyes, you can see that there is something deep that still lingers in his spirit. Or perhaps it is the pain from having to leave his 3 daughters behind in Vietnam when he left over 10 years ago with his wife and 2 sons.

Arriving in Tacoma as a refugee, Mr. Le with limited ability to speak English soon forged his way through the obstacles that all refugees face. During the first years in this country, as with all former political prisoners, it became very important to reconnect with his family and community. Mr. Le held a high position

in Vietnam, as well as a very highly respected position in his new home. Pulling from the strength of his community, he worked several years supporting and encouraging many of the people that came to America in the same way that he did, with only the clothes on their backs.

Finding his way to the Tacoma Community House where he studied English as a second language, he was determined to find a career in this country that would use his culture and strengthen the community of refugees in his new homeland. His effort along with DVR support and encouragement earned him a technical degree as a pharmacy technician as well as the English and American Culture certification. However, due to his language barrier, Mr. Le could not find job that would fulfill his wish and use his transferable skills.



“
Mr. Le helped to remove the barriers of fear and in fact brought comfort to our clients.”

– Marcia Golubic,
ICSC Director



When a position came open at the Indochinese Cultural Services Center (ICSC) for a Vietnamese Case Service Manager, VRC Tuyet Nguyen contacted the center’s director to discuss this opportunity for Mr. Le. Knowing of his standing in the Vietnamese community, Nguyen was certain that the fit would be perfect for Mr. Lee and for the community at the ICSC, most of whom are former refugees themselves and people in general, who have faced many of the same obstacles that Mr. Le had overcome. “Mr. Le is very respected and sought after within the Vietnamese community for advice, I knew that the fit at ICSC would be perfect for everyone,” says Nguyen.

Many of the people who come in to ICSC came from similar worlds of fear, mistreatment and horrible living conditions. “So many of the people who walk through our doors had their identities taken away from them in their homeland, they had to be comfortable and trust us here to give us information that in their homeland could have killed them. Mr. Le helped to remove the barriers of fear and in fact

brought comfort to our clients,” says Marcia Golubic, ICSC Director.

Mr. Le is an inspiration to the community at ICSC as a Vietnamese case manager and interpreter; with great enthusiasm he carries himself through his day with integrity and pride contributing greatly to the culture. He has had to deal with horrendous situations, leaving children behind against his will in a country he could no longer live in, being held captive and tortured. “He carries his own experience personally, encouraging others that are in distress to approach things with fortitude and to never give up, he is here to help and to serve,” Golubic says.



Mr. Le is a leader in his community.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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This policy is consistent with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1972, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1967, Executive Order 11246 as amended by Executive Order 11375, the Civil Rights Act of 1992, Governor's Executive Order 93-07, and the Washington State Law Against Discrimination, Chapter 49.60 RCW.

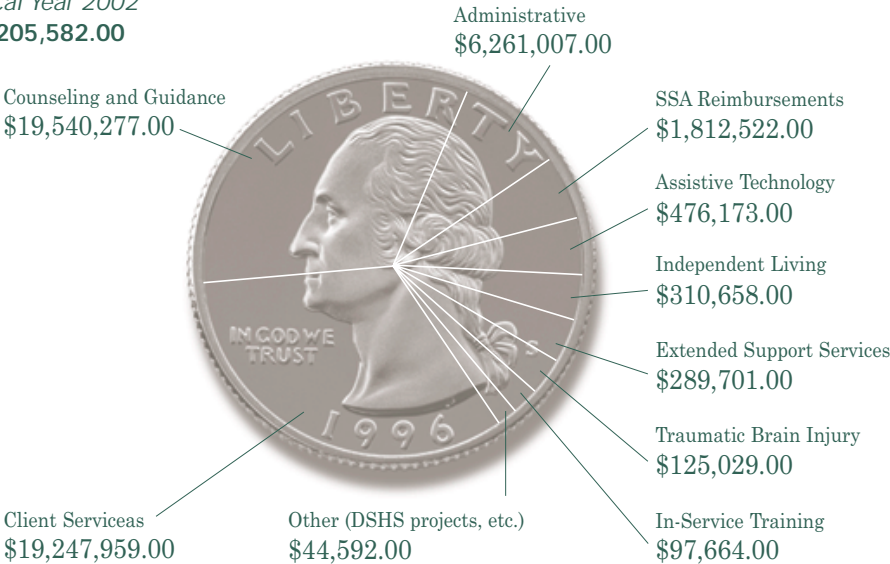
Sources of Revenue

Federal Fiscal Year 2002
Total: \$48,205,582.00



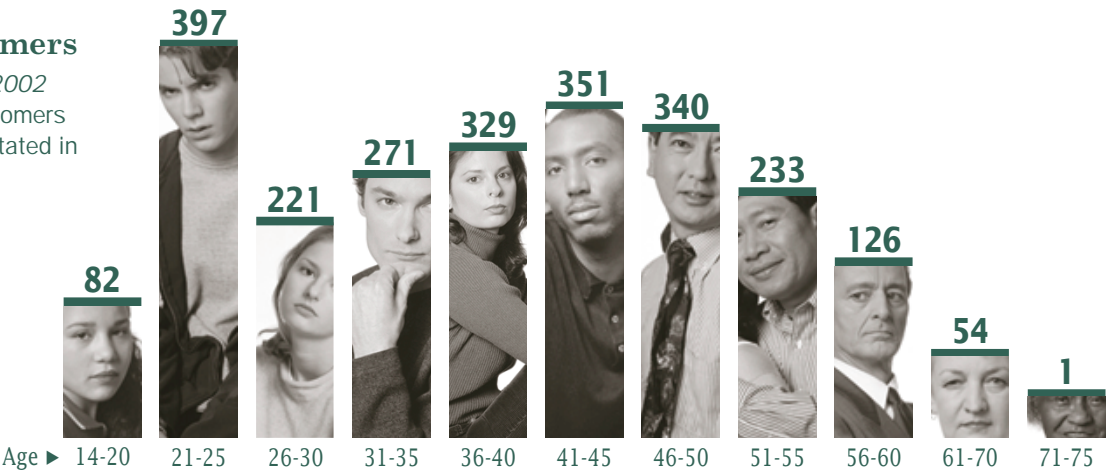
Categories

Federal Fiscal Year 2002
Total: \$48,205,582.00



Ages of Customers

Federal Fiscal Year 2002
Total number of customers successfully rehabilitated in various age groups.



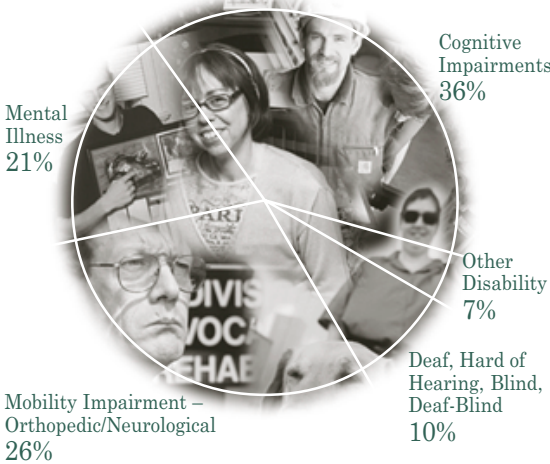
Average Earnings

Federal Fiscal Year 2002
Average annual earnings of customers before and after rehabilitation.



Types of Disabilities

Federal Fiscal Year 2001
Types of disabilities of customers successfully employed.



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